

REMARKS

This Amendment is responsive to the Office Action mailed August 11, 2006.

In the Office Action, claims 1, 8, 15 and 22 were rejected of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 1 of U.S. Patent No. 6,982,853. A terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 C.F.R. §1.321(c) is submitted herewith to overcome this rejection. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the obviousness-type double patenting rejection is, therefore, respectfully requested.

Claims 1-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Ohba et al. (6,836,387). As the Examiner will note, each of the independent claims has been amended to recite:

a first actuator arm portion defining a voice coil motor (VCM) supporting end, a head gimbal assembly (HGA) supporting end, a first latch portion, and a long axis extending from the VCM supporting end to the HGA supporting end;

a second actuator arm portion defining a second latch portion configured to latch with the first latch portion;

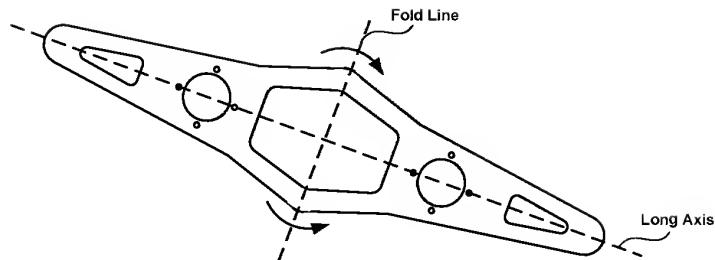
an actuator arm-joining portion joining the first actuator arm portion to the second actuator arm portion, the first actuator arm portion, the second actuator arm portion and the actuator arm joining portion being a single part made from the single flat sheet of material, rather than an assembly of sub-parts, and

a flex cable coupled to the first actuator arm portion and to the second actuator arm portion;

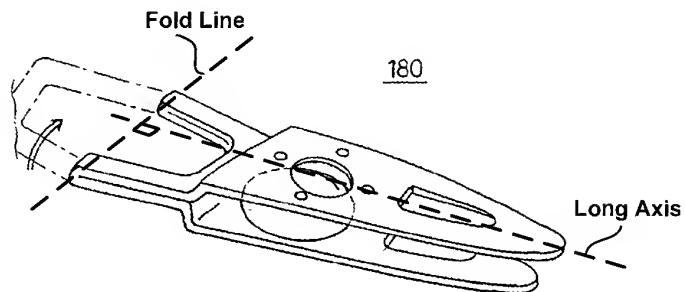
wherein the actuator arm-joining portion includes a fold along a fold line that is substantially parallel to the long axis.

In contrast, the arm-joining portions of Ohba et al. are folded along a fold line that is orthogonal to the long axis, rather than being “substantially parallel to the long axis” as required by Claim 1, as amended.

The actuator arms of Ohba et al., as shown in the below sketch, are in a state after they have been press-punched and before they have been folded.



As may be seen, the actuator arm portions of Ohba et al. are joined at their VCM supporting ends. After folding along the arrows shown above, the configuration of Ohba et al.'s Fig. 6A obtains as shown below:



Therefore, the actuator arms of Ohba et al. are folded along a fold line that is orthogonal to the long axis of the actuator arms, as suggested by the above drawing.

In contrast, the claimed actuator arm-joining portion includes a fold along a fold line that is substantially parallel to the long axis, as shown in Applicants' annotated Fig. 8 below:

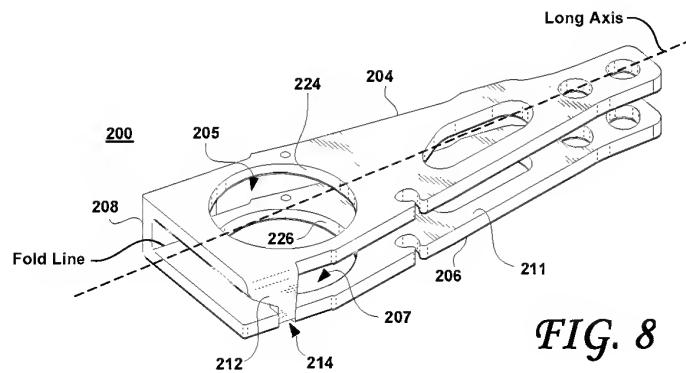


FIG. 8

As clearly shown in Applicants' Fig. 8, the claimed actuator arm-joining portion includes a fold along a fold line that is substantially parallel to the long axis. Ohba et al. do not teach any such structure or any method for making such an actuator arm assembly.

As each of the independent claims has been amended to include structure or steps that are not taught by the applied reference, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) are, therefore, respectfully requested.

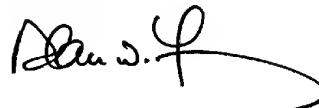
Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that including a fold line that is substantially parallel to the long axis of the first actuator arm portion is not obvious over Ohba et al. Indeed, orienting the fold line to be substantially parallel to the long axis of the first actuator arm confers advantages that are absent and unsuggested by Ohba et al. For example, the Examiner's attention is kindly drawn to Fig. 3 of the present application. Therein, it can be seen that orienting the fold line to be substantially parallel to the long axis of the first actuator arm results in a multi-part layout over the sheet metal area that is more efficient in terms of usage of the sheet metal real estate. In contrast, the layout taught by Ohba et al., in which the actuator arm portions are joined at their VCM supporting ends (as shown in the sketch above) is clearly less efficient in terms of sheet metal utilization (e.g., the number of actuator arm assemblies per unit area). Indeed, joining the actuator arms by their respective VCM supporting arms as taught by Ohba et al. (resulting in the fold line of Ohba et al. being perpendicular to the long axis), results in more wasted material and therefore additional cost. The claimed actuator arm assembly, head stack assembly, and disk drive are wholly unsuggested by Ohba et al. and provide unexpected advantages (i.e. advantages that would not have been expected based on the Ohba et al. reference) including, for example, an opportunity for less wasted sheet metal material and a more efficient area utilization of the sheet metal. For at

least the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the claimed embodiments are neither anticipated by, nor obvious over the applied Ohba et al. reference.

Applicants believe that this application is now in condition for allowance. If any unresolved issues remain, please contact the undersigned attorney of record at the telephone number indicated below and whatever is necessary to resolve such issues will be done at once.

No fees are believed to be due with this communication, however the Director is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required under 37 C.F.R. §1.16 or §1.17, to Deposit Account No. 23-1209, referencing K35A1300.

Respectfully submitted,



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By: _____

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